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Summary record of the 1st meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 13 October 2006, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Løvald (Vice-Chairman) ..... (Norway)

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In the absence of Mr. Gaspar Martins (Angola), Mr. Løvald (Norway), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters (PBC/2/BUR/1)

1. *The agenda was adopted.*

2. **The Chairman** said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Commission wished to hold open meetings under the Burundi configuration.

3. *It was so decided.*

4. **The Chairman** said that, if he heard no objection, he would prepare a summary of the day's deliberations.

5. *It was so decided.*

Peacebuilding in Burundi (PBC/2/BUR/CRP.2)

Consolidating peace — Critical issues

6. **The Chairman** drew attention to document PBC/2/BUR/CRP.2, which provided an overview of the situation in Burundi and detailed existing strategic frameworks, critical peacebuilding issues and international support.

7. Following more than a decade of civil war, Burundi was at a turning point. He congratulated the Burundian Government on the progress made to date, in particular the conclusion of the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement, the holding of successful democratic elections, the adoption of a modern and progressive Constitution and the process leading to the preparation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP).

8. Although many challenges remained in the quest for sustainable peace in Burundi, there was reason for optimism. The Government's political will to engage in the peacebuilding process was apparent from its participation in the work of the Commission, which was truly a joint effort. The success of that work depended on the ownership and engagement of the Burundian Government as well as on the sustained support and commitment of all international actors, including civil society and the private sector. While the Peacebuilding Commission would serve as a much-needed tool with which to address fragile post-conflict situations, it was not a panacea. However, it did provide United Nations Member States with a valuable opportunity to consolidate and coordinate their efforts to assist the people of Burundi.

9. The Commission would hear statements from Mr. Nduwimana, the First Vice-President of Burundi, and from Ms. Batumubwira, the Minister of External Relations and International Cooperation of Burundi.

10. **Mr. Nduwimana** (Burundi), speaking via videoconference from Bujumbura, expressed gratitude to the United Nations for all its efforts to secure peace in his country. The United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB) had made a vital contribution to the economic and social development of the nation and, with a view to its planned withdrawal at the end of December 2006, preparations were already under way for the establishment of the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB). He welcomed Burundi's election as a member of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission.

11. **Ms. Batumubwira** (Burundi) expressed her gratitude to the members of the Peacebuilding Commission for their tireless commitment to the achievement of lasting peace and stability in Burundi. During the civil war, more than 300,000 people had been killed and more than 850,000 had been displaced. The country's social and economic infrastructure had been destroyed and, as a result, GNP had decreased by 20 per cent between 1993 and 2000. Per capita income was currently at less than US$ 80.

12. Following the conclusion of peace and ceasefire agreements, Burundi had established all-inclusive national defence and security forces and set up democratically elected institutions. All Burundians now believed that the country belonged to everyone and the Government was committed to taking the appropriate measures to strengthen that belief. Despite sporadic banditry, security had been restored throughout the national territory, but the recent attempted coup had generated a lot of suspicion. Nevertheless, the Government had initiated dialogue with political leaders and representatives of civil society. Only through dialogue could lasting peace and sustainable development be achieved.

13. In order to build confidence among the population, the President had been meeting regularly with church leaders and other representatives of civil society, and various Government officials had met with

the media. The National Assembly had already adopted the PRSP, which was awaiting approval by the Bretton Woods institutions, and the Government was preparing to organize a donor round table in late 2006. The Peacebuilding Commission had an important role to play in that regard.

14. In order to respond to urgent needs and prevent destabilization, and following broad-based consultations, the Government had drawn up an emergency programme comprising five priority actions: relief for drought and famine victims; improvement of education and schools and access to basic health-care services; return and resettlement of refugees, displaced persons and ex-combatants; reinforcement of governance and the rule of law; and budgetary support. The National Committee for Aid Coordination (CNCA), established in December 2005, had developed a partner coordination framework designed to increase the delivery rate of promised assistance, thereby fostering economic recovery. Budgetary support could be very helpful in that regard. Nevertheless, although significant progress had been made since the establishment of the democratically elected institutions, a number of challenges still remained in, inter alia, the security, justice, health and education sectors.

15. The progress made in Burundi would not have been possible without the support of the United Nations. However, given the complex challenges facing post-conflict countries, the Peacebuilding Commission must take an innovative approach to its work by ensuring that the solutions it proposed were effective, flexible and original.

16. **Mr. Satti** (Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Burundi) recalled that two important milestones had been reached in Burundi: first, the signature on 7 September 2006 of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement between the Government and the Parti pour la libération du peuple hutu — Forces nationales de libération (PALIPEHUTU-FNL), and, second, the finalization of the PRSP, which had been submitted to the Bretton Woods institutions for formal review. The PRSP incorporated the Government's peace consolidation strategy, which was complemented by the United Nations Common Action Plan for Burundi for the period 2007-2008. The major challenges ahead revolved around strengthening the Government's capacity and ensuring a stable and conducive environment for the successful implementation of the PRSP and other peace consolidation processes. To that end, the Government, in consultation with its partners, must continue to work towards the introduction of fundamental institutional reforms, the completion of a comprehensive security sector reform, the establishment of transitional justice mechanisms and the full implementation of the Ceasefire Agreement.

17. The recurring cycles of conflict in Burundi had left the country socially and politically fractured and had contributed to a state of chronic underdevelopment and extreme poverty. Since up-to-date demographic and economic data were essential for peace consolidation, every effort must be made to provide technical and financial support for the planned population and agricultural censuses.

18. The war had also led to the progressive disinvestment of the rural sector and the destruction of existing social infrastructures, and restoring the State's capacity to deliver basic services to its citizens was a fundamental requirement for lasting peace. Concerns remained as to the ability of local communities to reabsorb the thousands of refugees, internally displaced persons and ex-combatants and, in that connection, there was an urgent need to reinforce mechanisms dealing with land conflicts.

19. Burundi's post-transition institutions remained weak, and constructive dialogue in the area of political governance was therefore crucial. The successful integration of former belligerents into security sector institutions and the creation of new defence and police services had resulted in increased stability, and a number of steps had already been taken to professionalize the security forces. However, much remained to be done in the areas of institutional capacity-building and technical and logistical support.

20. While the Government had expressed its commitment to human rights, a number of serious violations and abuses had been perpetrated during confrontations with the FNL. Impunity remained a problem, since the justice system lacked the human and material resources to administer justice and was perceived as lacking independence. Accordingly, reform of that system and improved respect for the rule of law were critical elements of the peace consolidation process. Furthermore, lasting peace in Burundi was unlikely to be achieved without reconciliation with the past, and the successful

establishment and functioning of the transitional justice processes remained an important challenge.

21. Some progress had been made toward the implementation of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement, including the launch, on 11 October 2006, of the Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism. However, the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) process had fallen behind schedule and every effort must be made to avoid further slippage. The United Nations stood ready to play its part in the JVMM and, until the conclusion of its mandate, ONUB was prepared to provide protection for the FNL combatant assembly areas.

22. The Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement would contribute to regional stability, but the proliferation of small arms within the civilian population in Burundi was a particular concern. However, the Government had launched an arms collection campaign and established a technical commission on civilian disarmament. Both initiatives must be supported.

23. The United Nations and its partners welcomed Burundi's PRSP and would be organizing a donor round table to mobilize resources for it. In line with the interim PRSP, the Government had prepared an Emergency Programme to bridge the gap between the humanitarian phase and socio-economic recovery. Pledges of $166 million for the Programme had been received in February 2006. The Government needed to strengthen its absorption capacity ahead of time in order to handle the additional resource flows.

24. Capacity-building was also needed in the programming and delivery of basic services for groups affected by the conflict and for other vulnerable groups. In September 2006, the Government had prepared a Consolidated Humanitarian Appeal for 2007 to meet the needs of displaced people returning to the country. In order to provide visible peace dividends and make progress towards the Millennium Development Goals, it would be providing free primary education and free health care for pregnant women and for children under five. International partners had provided some of the assistance needed for the construction of classrooms, the provision of school equipment, the training of teachers and the supply of medicines. Support had been provided by the United Nations, in partnership with other stakeholders, for elections and the DDR process, for capacity-building in State institutions, for the return and reintegration of internally displaced people and refugees, for socio-economic recovery both nationally and at community level, and for the education and health sectors. Priority areas of support over the next two years, spelled out in the United Nations Common Action Plan for 2007-2008 and the Joint Roadmap, included peace and democratic governance, security sector reform and civilian disarmament, human rights and justice, public information and communications, and reconstruction and socio-economic development. Short-term priorities were aligned with the Emergency Programme, longer-term ones with the PRSP in the context of work by the future United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB).

25. Priority areas for the Peacebuilding Commission were being identified through consultation with the Government, Member States, donors and other stakeholders. The Commission had an important role to play in focusing international attention and support on the issues which needed to be addressed in order to prevent any return to the cycles of violence and instability which had plagued Burundi since independence. Among the key issues was democratic governance and capacity-building in State and local institutions. Support in those areas would help to ensure continuing donor support, provide an enabling environment for the private sector and accelerate the delivery of peace dividends to the people. The Government's approach to democratic governance had recently aroused concern, and urgent efforts were needed to increase transparency and accountability and to enable the Parliament to function properly and civil society to play its part. The Government must commit itself to media development and respect for human rights, and to freedom of speech and opinion. More support was needed in that direction from Burundi's international partners. Assistance was also needed in developing national human rights institutions, including an independent national human rights commission, and for human rights training and education in the security forces and in civil society, including journalists and human rights NGOs. Reform of the justice system would be a lengthy process, in which the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Special Tribunal must take priority.

26. Increased support for the reform of the security sector was essential. Priority must be given to capacity-building programmes for the police, the

national defence force and the intelligence service. Controlling the proliferation of small arms and light weapons was crucial to the peace consolidation process.

27. New employment opportunities, especially for young people, would come about through the development of a dynamic private sector. Women, who had borne the brunt of the civil war, needed equal access to key factors of production in order to gain sustainable livelihoods. Host communities and returnees needed help in the form of short-term recovery projects. The risk of land conflicts would be mitigated by support for the National Land Commission and for the introduction of a national land management strategy, which would also promote economic revival.

28. **Mr. Alba** (World Bank) said that, since the Bank's approval of an Interim PRSP for Burundi in May 2005, its objectives in supporting the peace process had been to assist war-affected individuals and communities, and to help restore the foundations for poverty alleviation and growth. The Bank's involvement had brought results. With an elected government firmly in place, the full PRSP had been completed and implementation mechanisms were being established. The Government's economic programme was taking effect, with the support of the IMF Poverty Reduction Grant Facility (PRGF). Burundi had reached the HIPC Initiative decision point in August 2005, and was expected to reach the completion point by the end of 2007. Implementation of all Bank-funded operations had been satisfactory.

29. Given the devastating poverty levels in Burundi and the accompanying risks of renewed violence, the Peacebuilding Commission should focus on governance, employment generation and infrastructure rehabilitation, and economic and social recovery. It could assist the Burundian authorities to strengthen fiduciary systems and controls in the country's governance structures, which in turn would help the Government win the confidence of the population and of donors. It could promote transparency in the country's newly developing institutions by engaging with the Parliament and providing opportunities for civil society and other stakeholders to play their part. To prevent corruption, accountability mechanisms must be introduced into government structures at all levels.

30. Over the past few years, the Bank had supported the Government's programme of labour-intensive public works and employment generation. The Commission was well-placed to mobilize donor support and obtain resources from the Peacebuilding Fund for those efforts and for similar projects supported by other partners, to ensure they reached the most vulnerable groups, including former combatants.

31. Sound macroeconomic management was essential in sustaining the PRGF, but that in turn called for adequate and timely budget support from the international community. Two thirds of the country's 2006 budget depended on external funding, yet no external funds had been received in 2006. If salaries were not paid or prices rose sharply, the country's economic and political stability would be at risk. Lack of budget support would also prevent Burundi from reaching HIPC completion. The Commission could play a vital role in rallying donor support, and in assisting the Government and its national and international partners to address the principal risks for renewed conflict in Burundi, such as persistent poverty, corruption and poor governance in general, youth unemployment, insecurity and social inequality. The Commission should bring donors together to focus on specific thematic areas, so as to ensure coordination of effort, targeting of resources and careful monitoring of progress. The forthcoming donors' meeting would enable the Commission to mobilize donors not currently involved in Burundi to help the Government translate its PRSP priorities into clear targets, thus sustaining the peace process and gaining a breathing-space for broader development work.

32. **Mr. Toé** (International Monetary Fund) explained that the Fund had assisted Burundi with two emergency post-conflict assistance programmes in 2002 and 2003, and subsequently through the PRGF and the enhanced HIPC Initiative. A total of $26 million in assistance under those programmes had enabled Burundi to meet its immediate security and humanitarian needs, to improve the macroeconomic situation and to rebuild basic infrastructure. The programmes had resulted in reduced inflation, improved economic conditions and resumed growth. Burundi's administrative and institutional capacity had been strengthened and the Government had been able to reduce its debt burden, alleviate some of the widespread poverty and resettle many refugees and internally displaced people.

33. The three-year PRGF arrangement approved by the Fund in January 2004 would provide assistance amounting to $103 million, of which $81 million had so far been disbursed. The Fund was also providing substantial technical assistance. Interim debt relief was being granted until Burundi reached the completion point under the enhanced HIPC Initiative. When that stage was reached, it would qualify for the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI).

34. Under its PRGF-supported programme, Burundi had made good progress with macroeconomic and structural reforms and in monetary, exchange and taxation affairs. Democratic elections in 2005 had opened up opportunities to achieve economic stability and sustainable recovery. A business-friendly environment would attract investment and spur economic growth. Assistance was needed from the international community to build public institutions and administrative capacity. The management of public finance and of Government spending stood in need of improvement.

35. It was difficult for the Government to manage its budget as long as there were delays in receiving the external support which had been promised. Donor coordination should be improved to prevent uncertain timing of disbursements. A UNDP-sponsored round table for donors scheduled for November 2006 had been postponed, but it was important to hold one so that support for the objectives of the poverty reduction strategy could be identified. The Government's reform agenda deserved strong donor support.

36. **Mr. Nqakula** (South Africa) expressed confidence that a formula would be found for sustainable peace in Burundi. The facilitators of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement had been working to implement the policy of the African Union for peace and stability on the continent, and especially its policy framework for post-conflict reconstruction, social justice and sustainable peace. The policy framework was an instrument for consolidating peace and preventing a recurrence of violence, addressing the causes of conflict and improving coordination among the various actors involved in the post-conflict reconstruction process. During the negotiations in Tanzania both the Government and PALIPEHUTU-FNL had shown themselves willing to advance the cause of peace. He hoped that before the end of the year the DDR process would be under way and that all the elements of PALIPEHUTU-FNL would be reintegrated into the political, economic and social life of the country. As Facilitator for the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, he had established a presence in the country as a conciliator and moral guarantor of the Agreement, in keeping with its article 4, and would be remaining for the next 12 months in fulfilment of its terms and to help with any difficulties. In so doing, he would place reliance on the United Nations and on the other players, chiefly the Government of Burundi and the PALIPEHUTU-FNL. As previous speakers had made clear, solutions were available to the challenges the country was facing.

37. **Mr. Mahiga** (United Republic of Tanzania) said that his country and South Africa had been working together for 10 years, in the framework of the Regional Initiative for Peace in Burundi, to bring about the transition from conflict to peace. In that process, Burundi had been at the centre of a partnership between the Regional Initiative, the African Union and the United Nations, and it offered an example of a successful transition from an African to a United Nations peacekeeping force.

38. He congratulated the Government and people of Burundi on their achievement of democratic governance since August 2005. It was important for the Peacebuilding Commission to take account of the emergency plan formulated by the Government, in line with the Commission's own vision for countries transiting from conflict to peace. Burundi was among those countries which had experienced reverses in the peace process. His own country was well aware of the effects of relapses into violence, having received cyclical flows of refugees from Burundi over the past 40 years. It still had on its territory some 400,000 Burundian refugees, although many were now being repatriated, on either a voluntary or an assisted basis. The Peacebuilding Support Office should analyse the reasons for the setback in the peace process. A key reason, in his view, was the sheer neglect of Burundi on the part of the international community. A core function of the Peacebuilding Commission should be to focus attention on the peace process and to support the Government of Burundi and its people. The Government was giving high priority to human security, in line with the demands of the PALIPEHUTU-FNL for food security and for the provision of health and education services and shelter. He encouraged Burundi's partners to continue the assistance they were already providing. Among the

priorities in the Government's poverty reduction strategy for the next three years, he emphasized the need for democratic governance. Burundi had lost many of its trained personnel, and needed intensive capacity-building at central government and local levels. It also faced the challenge of integrating former PALIPEHUTU-FNL combatants into the regular army. In most of the conflicts where there had been a recrudescence of violence, the cause was inadequate attention to the restructuring of the security sector and to DDR. That had been the case in Liberia and in Sierra Leone. It was also a matter of resources, because, for political reasons, certain countries were extremely reluctant to have anything to do with the security sector. That position needed reviewing. Unpaid soldiers were potential lethal elements for a relapse into violence.

39. Another focus of attention for the Commission should be the need for transitional justice. The questions of impunity, amnesties and tribunals had figured prominently in the negotiations for the Comprehensive Peace Agreements.

40. Lastly, land reform and the recovery of property must be given due attention. Burundi had one of the highest population densities in the world. Some of the refugees had been out of the country for 30 years, and would be returning to an overpopulated country where the question of restoring their land and property rights could be a source of disturbance.

41. **Mr. Majoor** (Netherlands) said that, although Burundi was currently in the early post-conflict phase of the peace process, peace and stability could not be taken for granted. His Government would continue to work with the Government of Burundi to build a lasting peace and it welcomed the opportunity afforded by the Peacebuilding Commission to broaden and intensify the international commitment to supporting the peace process. All stakeholders must adopt an integrated approach to meeting the political, security and development challenges facing Burundi.

42. There must be a real dialogue among all parties and stakeholders in Burundian society, in accordance with the Arusha Peace Agreement, in order to provide a sound basis for a durable peace and reconstruction. The Peacebuilding Commission must assist the Government in its efforts to reform the security sector and promote peace and security in the country. Economic development must be promoted as an essential factor for peace; development was also linked to security issues and the need to reintegrate refugees, displaced persons and demobilized combatants.

43. The Peacebuilding Commission must work within existing structures such as the Arusha Peace Agreement, the Government's Emergency Programme and the PRSP but should highlight the need to address security issues and ensure that reconstruction and development initiatives were conflict-sensitive and helped reduce the likelihood of renewed conflict. He looked forward to working with all stakeholders to build a lasting peace and promote durable development in Burundi.

44. **Ms. Johnson** (African Development Bank) said the Peacebuilding Commission had a vital role to play in monitoring progress in security issues, the political process and socio-economic development. It should not duplicate the work of other stakeholders but should work to close the gaps between their activities. It should use its authority to convene coordination meetings among stakeholders; it could act as a catalyst, identifying problems and urging action to address them; it could complement the work of other stakeholders.

45. Much remained to be done and the Commission must, in cooperation with the Government and groups working in Burundi, identify the critical priorities for the short, medium and long term and assign responsibility for tackling them. It should also help plan the sequencing of actions during the post-conflict phase. The African Development Bank was in the process of reforming its procedures to increase its flexibility and response time; she looked forward to putting those new processes to work in Burundi.

46. **Ms. Løj** (Denmark) said it was important that the Commission adopt a pragmatic and operational approach in its country-specific actions. It should help Governments focus on critical priorities rather than trying to address every challenge simultaneously. It should also cooperate with all actors at the country level to achieve real results. She therefore welcomed the presence at the meeting of representatives from Burundian civil society because the involvement of civil society was crucial for a sustainable peace; she also stressed the role women should play in peacebuilding and recalled that the following week would be the sixth anniversary of the adoption of

Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security.

47. In Burundi, the Commission should focus on the crucial areas of reform of the security and justice sectors; promotion of good governance, including combating corruption and rebuilding institutions; and resolution of land and property issues. Those were prerequisites for progress towards socio-economic development. The Commission should not try to do everything however; it should take into account the role played by other stakeholders and concentrate on priority areas where it could make a real difference.

48. The current country-specific meetings should help the Commission develop a sense of direction and benchmarks for its future work. It should avoid making grand plans, valid only on paper, and focus on achieving concrete progress to benefit every citizen of the countries concerned.

49. **Mr. Verbeke** (Belgium) said the Commission could help lay the foundations for the socio-economic development of Burundi by helping the Government manage the many challenges it had identified. The Commission should focus on the areas of security, justice and governance. It should support not only the disarmament and demobilization but also the reintegration of combatants through the creation of an integrated professional army and community-based police force. It should support the National Commission on Land and Property to ensure just resolution of property disputes. It should also encourage sound political, economic and social policy, in particular through competent management of public spending.

50. He noted the importance of quick-impact projects, especially following the recent successful elections, that would increase the credibility of the Government in the eyes of the public. Development assistance and programmes must be conflict-sensitive and avoid any actions that could lead to a resumption of violence. A number of areas required the Commission's attention in the short term: the possible destabilizing effect of the return of large numbers of refugees; the need to ensure that the Government was able to pay the salaries of the security forces and the civil service; the reintegration of demobilized combatants; and the need to assist the FNL in implementing the Peace Agreement. The Commission's approach to such problems must be pragmatic and concrete, and of immediate benefit to the people of Burundi.

51. **Mr. Zhen** Min (China) said that, although progress had been made in Burundi during the previous year, many challenges remained. The Government of Burundi had made great efforts to promote the rule of law and rebuild the country and the Commission and international partners, drawing on their experience elsewhere, had an important role to play in helping the Government in its task of peaceful reconstruction. All stakeholders must work to eliminate poverty, increase employment and ensure economic development.

52. A number of valuable strategy documents, such as the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and the PRSP were available and provided a sound basis for further efforts. The Peacebuilding Commission should therefore play a trouble-shooting and coordinating role to ensure effective implementation of development plans for Burundi. Regional and international organizations could also play an important role but the Government of Burundi must assume ownership of the reconstruction process.

53. **Ms. Lintonen** (European Community) said that an effective peacebuilding strategy for Burundi must be based on analysis of the root causes of the conflict. The Peacebuilding Commission should have a common understanding of peace factors and provide a forum where even sensitive issues could be raised for discussion. The European Union had adopted a comprehensive Strategy for Africa, under which it was committed to strengthening dialogue on peace and security in Africa and supporting the efforts of its African partners to build stability. The European Union Special Envoy for the African Great Lakes Region worked in close cooperation with the United Nations and other international and regional organizations in order to strengthen the peace process in that region.

54. DDR and security sector reform were crucial, and Burundi needed a comprehensive policy to address both issues. Protection of the rights of minorities and elimination of all forms of discrimination should be included in human rights activities, and human rights violations such as torture and extrajudicial killings must be followed up. The Peacebuilding Commission should adopt a strong gender focus in all areas of its work and ensure the full participation of women's organizations in Burundi. She commended the efforts

of the Burundian Government to include civil society in its strategies, and stressed that coherent, concerted action was one of the key preconditions for achieving sustainable results.

55. **Mr. Chowdhury** (Bangladesh) said that the system of microcredit and the related empowerment of women through non-formal education, which had been successful in Bangladesh, could also be of value in Burundi. He welcomed the progress made in Burundi and expressed concern at the threats to its permanence.

56. The problems in Burundi called for a three-pronged approach. Political and economic problems, and electoral and constitutional reform, required a structural approach, based on peace-enhancing structures in the executive, legislative and judicial branches, through a process of democratization. The country's social problems called for a relational approach, whereby war-related hostilities would be reduced through the repair and transformation of damaged relationships. Reconciliation, bridge building and mass communication could play an effective role in that area. In that connection, he welcomed the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Special Tribunal but said that it was important to avoid retributive justice. The third approach to Burundi's problems should focus on the healing of individuals and victim empowerment.

57. Throughout the peacebuilding process, it was important for intermediaries such as teachers, lawyers and religious leaders to act as a link between the grass-roots and elite levels and become critical peacebuilding agents. He endorsed the views of the representative of Belgium on projects with rapid impact. The Peacebuilding Commission should work with all stakeholders. Peace and development in Burundi could be self-sustaining and mutually reinforcing and should be supported by the entire international community.

58. **Mr. Matussek** (Germany) commended the progress made by the Government of Burundi. Elected authorities were building a new relationship with international partners based on the principle of local ownership of the development process. In view of the fragility of the peace process, however, the remaining challenges must be met. The Peacebuilding Commission's strategy should have three priorities. The first priority was to strengthen good governance and democratization, with focus on establishing an effective administration and protection of human rights. The second was the ongoing reform of the security sector, including DDR, reform of the judicial system and combating corruption. The third priority was the economic reconstruction process.

59. National reconciliation was a basic precondition for sustainable peace. For that reason, he fully supported the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. It was important to ensure effective, regular consultations with local civil society, drawing on the expertise of the United Nations Country Team. He agreed with the representative of the European Community that a gender perspective must be integrated in all the work of the Peacebuilding Commission.

60. **Mr. Kodera** (Japan) said that one priority to be addressed was the lingering distrust and animosity following the conflict, particularly between the Hutu and Tutsi populations, which constituted a challenge to peacebuilding. It was therefore important to promote national reconciliation, particularly through the creation of a National Truth and Reconciliation Commission; DDR of ex-combatants; and integration of refugees and internally displaced persons into society. The second priority was institution-building. Political stability was crucial for achieving sustainable development in Burundi, as it was a prerequisite for attracting foreign investment and providing social services. However, political stability was being undermined by growing political tensions, underdevelopment of the legal system and a resulting lack of respect for the law. The focus of institution-building work should be on strengthening democratic governance, security sector reform and reform of the judiciary system.

61. Access to basic social services must be improved, particularly in the area of education and health care, including in rural areas. Agricultural development and diversification would help to eliminate land disputes and should be one of the priorities of the Peacebuilding Commission's work, with progress monitored over time. The Commission should also address the cross-cutting issues of gender equality and capacity-building, particularly in the public sector. He recalled the importance attached in Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) to the equal participation and full involvement of women in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security.

62. **Mr. Idoko** (Nigeria) said that the task of the Peacebuilding Commission was to consider how to improve stability in Burundi, without taking ownership of the structures put in place. A list of priorities should be drawn up, based on the country's immediate needs. A consensus appeared to have emerged from the discussion regarding both the sequence and the hierarchy of such priorities. He stressed the importance of reconciliation and confidence-building among Burundi's people and political actors, and echoed the comments made by the representative of Japan relating to the lingering distrust in the country, which must be addressed rapidly in conjunction with the Burundi authorities. Confidence and trust between people was a necessary foundation for any peacebuilding work. Greater cooperation was necessary in Burundi between civil society and the Government. He emphasized that the Peacebuilding Commission's country-specific meetings, which he had welcomed, should be as open as possible.

63. **Mr. Nshimprimana** (Burundi), speaking as the representative of civil society, said that all Burundi's complex needs could not be met at once. The most important thing was to prevent a return to violence, to which end three priority areas must be addressed. The first was the issue of community reconciliation. The DDR process had resulted in former combatants being brought back into proximity to their victims, with the associated risk of a return to violence, compounded by the circulation of arms among civilians. He expressed appreciation for the support received from the World Bank and the United Nations in the area of demobilization, reintegration and repatriation; however, the associated programmes covered only the physical return of the individuals in question, and not the issue of inter-community reconciliation.

64. The second priority area was the deficit in political, economic and social governance. There was a lack of transparency in the management of public assets, involving non-compliance with legal procedures. Further efforts were required in the area of participation by women in public structures. There was a lack of dialogue between political parties and civil society. He had welcomed the Government's initiatives regarding the media but regretted that they were not implemented throughout the Government as a whole.

65. The third priority area concerned the lack of appropriate, transparent mechanisms for transitional justice. As a result, the truth about the crimes committed during the several episodes of violence since Burundi's independence in 1962 had not been established, which meant impunity for the perpetrators and lack of justice for the victims.

66. To address those three priority issues, and thus prevent the risk of a return to violence, he recommended that the immediate efforts of the Peacebuilding Commission should focus on three steps. First, setting up an integrated programme for the disarmament of the civilian population and community reconciliation, based on the promotion of ongoing social and political dialogue between all actors and at all levels. Second, setting up appropriate mechanisms for transitional justice which complied with universal moral principles, after an extensive process of consultation with the people. Negotiations for such mechanisms were currently being held behind closed doors, but should be open to all interested parties. Third, providing training to institutions in democratic governance, aimed in particular at: members of parliament; members of government; leaders of political parties; local councils; and the new police and armed forces.

67. **Mr. Chungong** (Inter-Parliamentary Union) welcomed the emphasis placed by several speakers on the importance of democratic governance as one of the necessary elements to restore peace and sustainable development. He regretted, however, that little mention had been made of the institution of parliament — one of the essential elements of democratic governance. Parliament had a major role to play in the peacebuilding process, including, as part of the reconciliation process, acting as a forum for representatives of Burundian society to discuss their differences. Parliament also played an important role in developing a new legal framework for the country, and should be associated with the various mechanisms under discussion such as the PRSP and traditional justice mechanisms, either by establishing the appropriate institutional framework or through a reporting system. He stressed the oversight role of parliament, and in that connection would welcome the strengthening of Burundi's Government in terms of transparency and accountability. Peacebuilding efforts in the area of parliament should go beyond the provision of training to parliamentarians to include assistance in establishing an appropriate institutional framework.

68. **Mr. Cabral** (Guinea-Bissau) welcomed the progress made in the peace process in Burundi, particularly the commemoration — at national level — of the assassinations of two Burundian senior officials, which marked an important step in reconciliation and unicity. He had every confidence that the Burundian people were committed to rebuilding their country and achieving peace. That peace, facilitated by international support, must nevertheless be the fruit of their own efforts. To bring about reconciliation and sustainable peace, reforms must be achieved in the area of law and security, to ensure the rule of law and protection of human rights. Dialogue between all actors must be encouraged, involving the entire population in the peace process. While it was true that the Peacebuilding Commission was not a panacea, at least one priority should emerge from its work: that of making the funds available and implementing practical actions to make a real difference to the daily lives of Burundians.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.